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THE FILIPINOS' VAIN HOPE OF INDEPENDENCE.

BY MARRION WILCOX, EDITOR OF "HARPER'S HISTORY OF THE WAR
IN THE PHILIPPINES."

MR. JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE once protested, in very civil terms, against a besetting sin of his fellow historians. "In life," he wrote, "as we actually experience it, motives slide one into the other; and the most careful analysis will fail adequately to sift them. In history, from the effort to make our conceptions distinct, we pronounce upon these intricate matters with unhesitating certainty, and we lose sight of truth in the desire to make it truer than itself."

Precisely this desire to make the truth truer than itself seems to have urged on both friends and foes of the Administration's Philippine policy, with the result that, as we read the speeches and essays on this subject which have received the largest share of public attention recently, we find the conceptions of each advocate and partisan "distinct," indeed—so distinct that the confusion of mind produced by their flat contradictions, when taken all together, is rather appalling, in view of the urgency of the matter to be decided. Thus, Mr. Hoar, in his speech delivered in the United States Senate on April 17th, 1900, said that he for one was ready to answer the question, "What should we do in this difficult emergency?" He would declare now "that we will not take these islands to govern them *against their will*." But Colonel Charles Denby, late United States Minister to China, and member of the Philippine Commission, writing in June, 1900, under the caption, "Do We Owe Independence to the Filipinos?" asserted that the war was waged, practically, by a single tribe of natives, while the majority of the Filipinos were friendly to us. "If that be so," he reasons, "how far shall the doctrine that we must have the consent of the governed be construed to extend? Does it mean that we

must have the consent of all the governed, or does it mean the majority of the governed?" Again, Mr. Carl Schurz, replying to Senator Foraker, placed the responsibility for beginning hostilities upon President McKinley, charging him with having substantially declared war against the Philippine Islanders, striving for their freedom and independence, and with having provoked—directly provoked—an armed conflict. On the other hand, turning to the much quoted volume of the last annual report of military operations, which is devoted chiefly to campaigns in the Philippines, we come upon the commanding General's statement: "Never since the time Aguinaldo returned to Cavité, in May of 1898, and placed himself under the masterful spirit of Mabini, had he the slightest intention to accept the kind offices and assistance of the United States, except as they might be employed to hold Spain throttled, while he worked the scheme of self-aggrandizement;" that his plans were ripe for an outbreak, and that the publication of the views and intentions of the American Government (the particular act referred to by Mr. Schurz) was seized upon as a pretext that had been "eagerly waited for." I might easily give a score of such examples, if that would make the moral plainer. The facts are accessible—the very same set of facts, at the service of all—and the confusion is quite unnecessary. We have only to stop trying to make the truth truer than itself.

In this paper, I shall outline a single subject in Philippine history, having in mind especially a difference of opinion or of teaching that may be bluntly stated thus: The Americans promised, and did *not* promise, that the Filipinos should have independence. Rather than undertake to reconcile conflicting views on many points, let us confine our attention now to the most interesting question of all.

The war appears to us a thing of recent origin, growth and subsidence; but, if we take the natives' point of view, we shall realize that history scarcely records a more protracted struggle. The Spanish occupation, beginning in 1565, when Legaspi landed in Cebú, was extended to include Manila and a little of the adjacent territory in Luzon five years later; then the old Spanish adventurer declared that the small native town at the mouth of the Pasig River should be the capital of the archipelago, and proclaimed the sovereignty of his royal master over the whole group

of islands. This was only his bold-hearted promise, however, destined to be never perfectly justified. He did not announce an accomplished fact, but rather laid upon his successors the obligation to increase their holdings by attacking one tribal leader after another and conquering each district separately. If the natives had ever established at Manila, or elsewhere, a central government which all recognized, the task would have been comparatively easy; for on the overthrow of an old ruler a new master might readily have taken his place. Instead of this, we have the spectacle of a European nation attempting, decade after decade, through more than three centuries, to cultivate a sense of nationality which at the outset had not even germinated—to bring together under one ruler all the distinct elements of the population, though each hated and mistrusted all the others, loving its own freedom with savage intensity.

We have abundant evidence that the inter-tribal hatred was more intimate and ineradicable than that aroused by the Spaniards, and this we should assume were direct proof not at hand, for we know that the principal divisions of the population represent earlier invasions, successive waves of infinitely more cruel conquest. Spain's rule, in itself considered, was not by any means altogether and always intolerable, though we find Senator Hoar saying: "The people of the Philippine Islands have never submitted themselves willingly to Spain; there has been no time for two centuries when they would not have been free from the yoke if they could; their history has been a history of cruelty and oppression on one side, of resistance and the aspiration for freedom on the other"—a too emphatic statement, which was probably due to confusing the Spanish administration in the Philippines with that in Cuba. But in Cuba the Indians were exterminated, scarcely a trace of them remaining; whereas the native population of the Philippines has increased ten-fold, certainly, and probably twenty-fold, since Legaspi's day. The crimes of Spanish officials at Havana were so impressed upon the imagination of Americans in 1898, that our people, reasoning from the known to the unknown, have quite naturally assumed the existence of equal enormities in the government at Manila; whereas the temptation to adopt cruel methods was not presented by the comparatively poor dominion in the East Indies. The Spanish force in the Far East was at no time commensurate with such an undertaking, and

the original design of Philip II., to conquer the islands in order to Christianize the natives, gave its shaping to the Spanish policy. A well-trained observer, Sir John Bowring, Governor of Hong Kong, gave his impression of the state of affairs, during an interval of peace half a century ago, in his book, "A Visit to the Philippine Islands" (London, 1859). "The government," he says, "with some remarkable exceptions, appears to have been of a mild and paternal character." If this judgment errs somewhat on the side of leniency, it may for that reason help us to recognize the truth in regard to the old régime, which lies between the "cruelty and oppression" of Senator Hoar and the "mild and paternal character" of Sir John.

We shall be misled if we persist in believing that Spanish folly was the sole or chief cause of native opposition; the cause is to be sought in the very nature of Tagalog and Visayan and "Moro" Malays, Ilocanos, highlanders brown and black, and all the rest—people, in brief, divided and dispersed among hundreds of islands, in dense forests, among inaccessible mountains. We know how such conditions, anywhere in the world, foster a spirit of independence. Of course, there has always been secret or open resistance in some quarter, so that each year produced its plot, each generation its revolt. Thus, in 1622, the natives of Bohol Island "threw off the yoke," as Mr. Hoar would say, and, under a leader named Dagóhoy, held their own against the Spanish troops for thirty-five years; thus, the eastern provinces of Mindanao maintained a guerilla warfare from 1629 to 1632. Sámar islanders in 1649 resisted the government's attempt to press them into the King's service (as descendants of the same stiff-necked people refused to take orders from Aguinaldo in 1899); that revolt spread to Albay Province in Luzon, to Masbate Island, to Cebú—even to Zamboanga, in Mindanao. Nearly the whole of central and northwestern Luzon was aflame with revolt in 1660, when the armed followers of the rebel chief, Andrés Malong, numbered forty thousand men. And so to the end of the seventeenth century and through the eighteenth a series of violent outbreaks may be traced; and when we reach the nineteenth century, we recall Novales's attempt to seize the capital in 1823, the disturbances in Cebú in 1827, the riots which culminated in the murder of the Spanish governor of Negros Island in 1844, the Cavité insurrection in 1872, and that most important revolutionary movement

which began in 1896. As we review this series, we find that the immediate causes of these outbreaks—the provocations or pretexts—were as diverse as possible, while their common factor was simply the savage or half-savage impulse to fight against any effort to curtail the traditional freedom, especially when the aim of such efforts was to bring the native tribes into relations of concord with hereditary foes—and with each other.

The insurrection of 1896 must be considered by itself, for that occurred after the natives had begun to learn organization, and, through their participation in the Philippine Assembly, which Spain conceded to them thirty years ago, to crave a full measure of political equality, of which they had just a taste; nor should we forget the rather tantalizing vistas that had been granted to an earlier generation, when deputies or representatives from the Philippines sat in the Spanish Cortés, at various times between 1809 and 1837. Finally, some of the barriers that separated tribe from tribe had been broken down; there was a glimmer, here and there, of a *common* aspiration—a drawing together upon rare occasions, though still with suspicion and reluctance. Señor Mabini prefers to link together the movements of 1872 and 1896, as though the agitation had been practically continuous; he speaks of the work of “young Filipinos,” who, as students in Spain, sought to make known the real wants of the Philippine people, and who founded a paper in which they demanded “the promulgation in these islands of the Spanish Constitution, and complete assimilation of the same on equal terms with any of the Spanish provinces on the continent.” The Spaniards turned a deaf ear to these demands, he tells us, on the ground that they were proffered by a few “idealists,” and saying, always at the instigation of the friars interested in maintaining the *status quo*, that the people were still in a savage state—that is, in effect, they had not undergone the evolution in character which would enable them to make good use of the privileges claimed.

In other words, to the heterogeneous and very unmanageable mass of the people, who knew nothing of the Spanish Constitution, nor wished to hear of it, were superadded small groups of men who had travelled and read; enthusiasts whose enthusiasm in most cases was perfectly genuine, though their ideas and phrases, borrowed from the French Republic and our own, seemed strangely, rather pathetically, out of place. And now, how plainly the

several classes or elements stand out from their troubled background, if we will but look: the handful of idealists (for the Spanish characterization was just) whose names became familiar as martyrs, members of Aguinaldo's Cabinet, or insurgent generals; the densely ignorant majority, fixed in their hostility to any invasion; a wavering, half-educated minority, easily influenced, without principle, now friends, now foes, in sudden, shameless transition; last of all, the friars, naturally upholding the order they themselves had established (and in which some of them had sinned egregiously), attacked as obstructionists by all advocates of change! With the first element alone have we had diplomatic intercourse; of the second element, our soldiers have killed large numbers, though as yet a small percentage; from the third element, we have appointed local rulers and magistrates, who have collected funds for the support of the insurrection, while safeguarding themselves, their families and near friends under the Stars and Stripes; the duty of dealing with the fourth element is one of the difficult tasks assigned to Judge Taft and his associates on the present Filipino Commission.

If I were writing as a dramatist or a novelist, I should like to represent the situation otherwise; for it would make an appeal of classic simplicity, convincing, admitting of only one reply, if I should say that an entire people had united in an aspiration, looking to us for its fulfillment. But we are at the moment obedient to facts. The Filipino people have never united, either in war or in peace, for protest or for appeal. We have never negotiated with them or questioned them as a whole, or through individuals who could be properly regarded as the authorized representatives of a majority. They have never told us what they wish or expect, and we do not know what is the real desire to-day of those uninterpreted millions, except as we may search the records, sincerely trying to understand their permanent characteristics and the history of their relations with the Spaniards and each other.

To win recruits for the movement among people of their own class, the idealists founded Masonic lodges at Manila, and organized the Philippine League; but comparatively little was effected by secret societies, until one was formed which made its appeal to the lower orders by a crude ritual based upon ancient, savage customs. This was the Katipunan Society, otherwise known as K. K. K., these initials representing the words *Kalaastaasan Ka-*

galanggalang Katipunan, signifying "the very exalted and honorable union." Even this, though it thrived remarkably during the years 1893-96, fell far short of the proportions of a national movement: many thousands of members were enrolled, but they were chiefly Tagálogs, inhabiting a few provinces of southwestern Luzon. Denunciation and imprisonment of the ringleaders forced matters to a crisis; violent methods of repression begot violence, and on August 30th, 1896, the first serious engagement of the insurrection took place—the beginning of that final revolt against the Spaniards which was to be transformed into a movement against the Americans. And, as such things happen everywhere, a popular leader had been found—a young man, the secret of whose power was that, in his character, he more nearly resembled the mass of the natives than did the clever *mestizos* who have been characterized, in the reports of our officers and the letters of our correspondents, as "the brains of the revolution."

Aguinaldo showed the quality of his leadership in his first proclamation, dated at Old Cavité, October 31st, 1896, by calling upon the people to support a republican government "like that of the United States of America;" but at the end of the fighting, in the secret treaty of Biac-na-bató, he was forced to admit a temporary defeat and the indefinite postponement of his ideal. The recognition of a Philippine Republic, as a sovereign state, seemed, in December, 1897, more remote than ever; for the leaders of the revolt went into exile, the patriotic forces, for their part, agreeing to disband, give up their arms, and abandon the places held by them, while the government promised little more than a programme of reforms. Measured by a Western standard of promptness, neither party quite lived up to the agreement. The insurgents cherished thoughts of further resistance during the months when the government was "creeping like snail unwillingly" toward the realization of the concessions. But, on the other hand, we must remember that one of the clauses of the Biac-na-bató treaty, according to both the Filipino and Spanish versions of it, provided in effect for an amnesty of three years, during which period the promised reforms should be introduced and developed. This shows plainly enough that neither party expected, or had the right to expect, immediate fulfillment. In point of fact, the whole matter was thrown into the background by the great events of the next spring. It is, therefore, not merely uncharitable, but obvi-

ously unjust, to lay stress upon the non-performance of difficult conditions which, in the most favorable circumstances, could not have been hurried. A more important point for our consideration is this: The Americans came upon the scene when such matters were still pending, when vital questions were still open, and while heartburning and rancor were increased through fear of new injuries and treacheries. We shall misapprehend some of the manifestations of hostility toward American troops and American measures, unless we bear in mind that a movement begun against the Spaniards had not altogether ceased in May, 1898; that its forces only waited for such a signal as Aguinaldo's return to show that they utterly repudiated the hollow treaty of Biac-na-bat6; and that, inevitably, much of the hatred with which the Filipinos regarded their ancient enemy was transferred to a new object when Merritt's army supplanted Augustin's. At least among the more ignorant natives, there was such prejudice as they would have displayed if their enemy had changed merely in name—not in nature, practices or motives.

The idealists had played their best trump, and had lost; the inherited protest against foreign domination had been intensified by personal experience, and one more failure had been added to the long list of futile efforts.

What happened then seemed to them a miracle. From the other side of the world, a nation which had been the idealists' model suddenly interposed; a people representing to their minds all that was generous, disinterested and chivalrous (they have written out their views in full to this effect, and we may read them in their public documents) would fight with them against a common enemy, and would compel success! Nearly six months filled with illusions followed—months of vain hope, for which you will scarcely find a parallel by searching the stories of nations.

Major-General E. S. Otis says, in the "Annual Report of the Major-General Commanding the Army:"*

"It is well known that a small band of men, natives of Luzon, and leaders of the rebellion of 1896 against Spain, were induced by the latter country, through a money consideration, to remove permanently from the islands. It is also well known that, after the destruction of the Spanish fleet in the harbor of Manila, and the blockade of that city by the United States' naval forces, a number of these men returned to the vicinity of Manila, and undoubtedly with the aid and consent of the agents of the United States government. They were doubtless

*February, 1900, Part 2, page 365.

encouraged by citizens of the United States, and others, acting without authority, to attempt the organization of what they were pleased to denominate an independent government for the Philippine people, they themselves to become its controlling element."

Now let us ask, Who were these "agents of the United States" and "citizens of the United States" who aided and consented to the return of Aguinaldo and his associates, or encouraged them to organize an independent government? The "others" are not important, except to partisans who are vainly and quite unnecessarily attempting to shift responsibility to English shoulders.

On May 5th, 1898, Mr. E. Spencer Pratt, Consul-General of the United States at Singapore, sent to the Department of State at Washington a copy of the Singapore *Free Press*, containing a report of the departure of Aguinaldo to join Commodore Dewey, and stated that the facts were, in the main, correctly given. That report contained the following sentence:

"General Aguinaldo's policy embraces the independence of the Philippines, whose internal affairs would be controlled under European and American advisers. American protection would be desirable temporarily, on the same lines as that which might be instituted hereafter in Cuba."

We need not inquire more closely what passed between the two men at Singapore, or what professions were made by this "agent of the United States." We may wholly disregard Aguinaldo's version of the promises that were held out to him. All we need to do, at present, is to plant our feet securely upon firm ground, as it were, of admissions contrary to self-interest. Subsequently, at Hong-Kong, there were interviews in the course of which another "agent" of the United States, Consul-General Wildman, discussed with Aguinaldo the probable course of the American government; and, as the precise nature of the assurances then exchanged is in dispute, we confine ourselves here also to facts which are of record. Thus, on June 10th, 1898, Aguinaldo addressed an appeal to President McKinley "in the name of this people, which trusts blindly in you . . . to leave it free and independent;" in the proclamation of June 18th, he asserted that the aspiration of his whole life, the final object of all his wishes and efforts, was the independence of the people of the Philippines; on June 23d, he issued a decree whose first article stated that the aim of the revolutionary government should be "to fight for the independence of the Philippines, until it shall be expressly recognized

by the free nations, including Spain, and to prepare the country for its organization as a true republic." On June 25th, Mr. Wildman wrote to Aguinaldo from Hong-Kong:

"I have vouched for your honesty and earnestness of purpose to the President of the United States and to our people, and they are ready to extend their hand to you as a brother, and aid you in every laudable ambition. I give you my assurance that you can always call upon me to act as your champion, should any try to slander your name. Do not forget that the United States undertook this war for the sole purpose of relieving the Cubans from the cruelties under which they were suffering, and not for the love of conquest or the hope of gain. They are actuated by precisely the same feelings toward the Filipinos."

We should also cite, in this connection, a remarkable passage in a letter written by Aguinaldo on August 1st, 1898, in reply to one from Mr. Williams, who had been United States Consul at Manila until the beginning of the war with Spain:

"I have full confidence in the generosity and philanthropy which shine in characters of gold in the history of the privileged people of the United States, and for that reason, invoking the friendship which you profess for me and the love which you have for my people, I pray you earnestly, as also the distinguished generals who represent your country in these islands, that you entreat the government at Washington to recognize the revolutionary government of the Filipinos, and I, for my part, will labor with all my power with my people that the United States shall not repent their sentiments of humanity in coming to the aid of an oppressed people. Say to the government at Washington that the Filipino people abominate savagery; that, in the midst of their past misfortunes, they have learned to love liberty, order, justice, and civil life, and that they are not able to lay aside their own wishes when their future lot and history are under discussion. Say also that I and my leaders know what we owe to our unfortunate country; that we know how to admire and are ready to imitate the disinterestedness, the abnegation, and the patriotism of the grand men of America, among whom stands pre-eminent the immortal George Washington. You and I both love the Filipinos; both see their progress, their prosperity, and their greatness. For this we should avoid any conflict which would be fatal to the interests of both people, who should always be brothers. In this you will acquire a name in the history of humanity and an ineradicable affection in the hearts of the Filipino people."

After reading this, we do not need to be told that Mr. Williams had suggested to the writer that annexation to the United States was scarcely indispensable to the happiness and glory of the islands; to get its full meaning, however, we must remember that the writer was the head of a government which already ruled in fourteen provinces of Luzon; that our navy had, a few weeks be-

fore, turned over 1,300 prisoners to the Filipinos "for safe keeping," as Admiral Dewey puts it; and that our army was being placed under obligations to the forces surrounding and besieging Manila, "without which," Aguinaldo wrote to General Otis, "you might have obtained possession of the ruins of the city, but never the rendition of the Spanish forces, who could have retired to the interior towns."

The leader of the first military expedition from the United States to the Philippines, General Thomas M. Anderson, whose command entered the Bay of Manila on the 30th of June, 1898, was in a position to learn the views actually entertained by Aguinaldo at the outset, as distinguished from those adopted by the revolutionary government and expressed through its president when their affairs were in a desperate condition. He has told the readers of *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW* that the Filipinos certainly thought that American agents and citizens "acting without authority," had given assurances that a Filipino government would be recognized, "probably inferring this from their acts rather than from their statements;" and, in his account of an official call that the native chief paid him, "coming with cabinet and staff and a band of music," occurs a passage unrivalled for *naïveté* in the literature of the subject. He says that Aguinaldo "asked if we, the North Americans, as he called us, intended to hold the Philippines as dependencies. I said I could not answer that, but that in one hundred and thirty years we had established no colonies. He then made this remarkable statement: 'I have studied attentively the Constitution of the United States, and I find in it no authority for colonies, and I have no fear.' It may seem that my answer was somewhat evasive, *but I was at the time trying to contract with the Filipinos for horses, carts, fuel, and forage.*" General Anderson also says that the insurgents, before consenting to withdraw from their positions in the suburbs of Manila (August 14th, 1898) insisted upon receiving a promise "to reinstate them in their present positions on our making peace with Spain," and that General Merritt, while stating that he could not give such a pledge, told them that they could rely on the honor of the American people.

On this occasion, General Merritt made known the terms of his proclamation to the Filipino people. "The government established among you by the United States Army is a government of military

occupation"—thus his proclamation reads; directions are given and assurances offered which shall hold good "while our military occupation may continue," and General Merritt declares that he has received "instructions from his government to assure the people that he has not come to wage war upon them, nor upon any party or faction among them, but to protect them in their homes, in their employments, and in their personal and religious rights." It would not have required at the time a lively imagination to foresee the flattering push that sufficed to make these smooth, round expressions of amity roll toward the goal of native desire; and we are not in doubt as to the interpretation actually put upon them, for we may read in the Malolos manifesto of January 5th, 1900, that "the American General, Señor Merritt, himself corroborated the determined and declared intention [of Aguinaldo] to make war upon the Spaniards for the reconquest of our liberty and independence in the proclamation which he addressed to the Filipinos, . . . the declaration being clearly and expressly made therein that the naval and land forces of the United States came to give us our liberty."

The conduct of General Otis in this matter was irreproachable. No feature of the account of events prior to February 4th, 1899, which he gives in his very full report, deserves more attention than the scrupulous care with which he explained to the native leader, reiterating this statement when he found opportunity, that neither he himself nor any other American officer, civil or military, had been authorized to promise that the United States would recognize the independence of the Philippine Islands—that the action of Congress must be secured before even the Executive could proclaim a definite policy, and that the policy to be proclaimed must conform to the will of the people of the United States, expressed through their representatives in Congress. In effect, therefore, the commanding General warned the revolutionists to wait for a decision which would be rendered in 1900. In a letter sent on September 8th, 1898, to Aguinaldo at Malolos, he wrote:

"Thus have I endeavored with all candor and sincerity, holding nothing in reserve, to place before you the situation as understood by me, and I doubt not by the Republic which I represent. I have not been instructed as to what policy the United States intends to pursue in regard to its legitimate holdings here, and hence I am unable to give you any information on the subject."

The amended proclamation of January 4th, 1899, he says, was

regarded by the better class of natives as the first authoritative announcement of the attitude which the United States assumed toward the islands.

Although not the first, far and away the most enduring, impression of American intentions in regard to the future control of the Philippines was made upon the Filipino mind by the gallant gentleman who destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay. That fleet seems to us a rather poor affair, but for generations it had represented Spanish power; these were the cruisers and gunboats that had put an end to the scourge of Moro piracy. Not the Spanish army, but the fleet and the friars had dominated the archipelago. From many sources we have evidence of the universal esteem in which Admiral Dewey was held by the natives. He typified America for them: any American's saying, caught up by the people as especially favorable to their cause, of a noble and generous sound, might eventually be ascribed to him; and such ascriptions are entirely familiar, requiring no further explanation to ourselves, who will scarcely let a pithy saying rest until it has been attributed to Lincoln, or a jocose story set sail unless Senator Depew gives it clearance.

Admiral Dewey, in reply to that one of Aguinaldo's public statements which was singled out for especial notice in this country, although it is perhaps the least important—the appeal addressed to “the civilized nations” and issued from Tarlac on September 23d, 1899, not long before the disintegration of the revolutionary government—wrote a short letter which was read in the United States Senate on January 31st, 1900. “I never promised,” the Admiral declared, “directly or indirectly, independence for the Filipinos. . . . He [Aguinaldo] never alluded to the word independence in any conversation with me or my officers.” The emphatic and explicit denial contained in this letter seemed to dispose of the insurgents' contention, so far as Admiral Dewey was concerned, and its practical effect was to discredit the entire appeal, according to the dictum, “*falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*,” until the subsequent publication of the admissions by Generals Otis and Anderson made a further study of the subject imperative. The phrase “directly or *indirectly*,” in the sentences quoted, is, indeed, almost a challenge to criticism. In this connection we must read from pages 111, 114 and 117 of the Appendix to the Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation for the

year 1898. A decree issued by Aguinaldo and dated at Cavité on June 18th, 1898, contained the following paragraph:

"In the face of the whole world, I have proclaimed that the aspiration of my whole life, the final object of all my wishes and efforts, is your independence [i. e., that of the people of the Philippines], because I have the inner conviction that it is also your constant longing, since independence for us means the redemption from slavery and tyranny, the recovery of lost liberty, and the admission to the concert of civilized nations."

A "Message of the President of the Philippine Revolution," dated at Cavité, June 23d, 1898, concludes with the words:

"Such a people [i. e., the people of the Philippines] is called to be great, to be one of the strongest arms of Providence to direct the destinies of humanity; such a people has sufficient resources and energy to free itself from the ruin and annihilation into which the Spanish government has plunged it, and to claim a modest but honorable seat in the concert of free nations."

These documents were sent to Admiral Dewey by Aguinaldo on July 15th, 1898, and two days later were forwarded to Washington by the Admiral with the indorsement, "For the information of the [Navy] Department, George Dewey." Again, in a dispatch from Admiral Dewey to the Secretary of the Navy, sent from Hong-Kong, July 22nd, 1898, we may read: "The following is for the Secretary of War. . . . *The people expect independence.* [Signed] Anderson, commanding. Dewey."

The comments of those whose sympathy with the natives' aspirations or whose antagonism to the Administration gives them the character of advocates, rather than of dispassionate judges, are easily surmised:—Indirectly or by implication, the promise referred to was made; inasmuch as both the Navy Department and War Department had been informed of the insurgents' aspirations, and inasmuch as the presumption in favor of granting independence was so strong, our government was committed, by its temporizing course, to acceptance of the natives' views. Such is a point of view that has much to recommend it, especially if it helps us to accept as a debt of honor the obligation to do for the Filipinos, not necessarily what a few dreamers may demand, but more and better than the mass of the people can ask or think.

But do we not here come upon an illustration of the peril of "losing sight of truth in the desire to make it truer than itself"?

In justice to the Filipinos and to ourselves, in view of the

evidence, we can say no less, no more, than that some Americans promised, while America did not promise, that the Philippine Islands should have independence. When Mr. Schurz writes that the history of the world does not furnish "a single act of perfidy committed by any republic more infamous than that which has been committed by President McKinley's Administration against our Filipino allies," and invites Senator Foraker to "ransack all his knowledge of the annals of mankind for an act of treachery more base and infamous," the bad results of over-emphasis may be seen not merely in a certain resentment aroused (if at the moment one's sense of humor happens to be mislaid), but also in a tendency to attach even undue importance to General Otis's warning and to the circumstance that the assurances, offered by persons not authorized to give them, were received by persons not truly representative.

Have we any reason to believe that the Filipinos *could* establish a good government for themselves—that the kind of republic their *mestizo* leaders claim the right to institute would bring to them the blessings they desire? Does the history of such experiments in tropical and sub-tropical countries encourage us to believe it would be less than downright cruelty to leave them to their own devices? Frankly, I fear that such adjectives as "base" and "infamous" might, with a rather terrible appositiveness, be employed to characterize the act of a nation, familiar as our own with the details of the story of republican experiments in Central and South America and the West Indies, knowing how idle it is, as a rule, to look for good government of the tropics by the natives of those regions, knowing also, as we do now, that the difficulties are greater in the Philippines than elsewhere, and the outlook still more hopeless,—if that nation, having used the power of its navy and army to overthrow the Spanish dominion there, should then shirk the obligation to set up a better government.

I think that the Filipinos' long struggle to win a privilege which they could not enjoy, and their American illusion, claim fairly and surely a response from true American sentiment—that will insist on being rid of both sentimentalism and prejudice—whether one look for the answer in Administration circles or in the opposition. To discover what is best for such wards of the nation, and to do it—this duty has all the fascination of difficulty.

Res severa est verum gaudium.

MARRION WILCOX.